

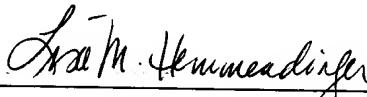
merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.” M.P.E.P. § 803.

Applicants respectfully request that the invention groups be rejoined and that claims 1-38 be examined on the merits. At a minimum, Applicants request that Groups I and II be rejoined. The single claim of Group II, claim 14, is multiply dependent on claims 1-13 and should not have been separated from those claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



Lisa M. Hemmendinger
Registration No. 42, 653

BANNER & WITCOFF
1001 G Street, N.W., Eleventh Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001-4597
(202) 508-9100